

The Sun.

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The Republican Platform.

That the committee on resolutions of the Republican convention will report, and the delegates will adopt, a declaration of principles unequivocally and exclusively American in origin and sentiment is beyond doubt. The nation is not in a mood to subordinate its interests to a vague and sentimental conception of ill defined obligations to humanity, nor would any sane body of citizens permit the passions of aliens and their native sympathizers to tincture its declarations. Furthermore, the convention will call for adequate military and naval establishments, and for the adoption of a practicable plan of national defense; nor will it, in these particular, we feel sure, shrink from recognizing that citizenship, besides conferring advantages on those who enjoy it, imposes on them corresponding responsibilities.

In addition to this, the convention must offer a feasible programme for the protection of American industry and commerce, within the United States and beyond its borders. The exact method of procedure by which the nations of Europe will endeavor to rehabilitate themselves in manufactures and trade when the opportunity is offered cannot be foretold. But it is certain that the necessities of their situation will compel a co-operation between Governments and business which cannot be successfully met in our domestic markets, to say nothing of the markets of the world, without a similar cohesion of effort on our part. American traders and manufacturers will be unable to stand competition from abroad if they must struggle at the same time against persecution at home. They, and the thousands dependent on their success, will require the cordial and sympathetic assistance of Federal and State Governments to hold what they have won and to extend the volume of their business.

Preparation for the attack that will be made after the war on American markets offers few chances for picturesque endeavors. But it is as essential as military preparedness. It involves the well being of every resident of the country. It is essential for the employer, imperative for the employee; and no party can ignore it, or consign the issue to adjustment by the accidents of time or the incidence of fortuitous circumstance.

The Pending Oratorical Contest.

Rules which may be adopted for the orderly movement of events in the coming Republican national convention are of course the sole concern of the convention itself. Outside criticism is clearly inconsequential if not impertinent.

If, therefore, it is true that there is now in contemplation a letting loose of all the floodgates of oratorical frightfulness, instead of a curtailing of each of the fourteen or fifteen geyser to ten minute eruptions, as was at one time suggested, it is the convention's own business. There is no society for the suppression of unnecessary suffering in political conventions. There is no law to which appeal may be made. It is purely a case of the mere claims of common humanity, and in these days injunctions based on common humanity do not seem to have much standing in court.

As the matter now stands it would appear that relay after relay of gifted orators, not after they too full for froth or foam, is to be turned loose one after the other upon the sweltering, defenceless thousands in the great convention hall. For the sufferers themselves no reasonable basis for hope is discernible. To be sure, there have been instances of tortured delegates and spectators attempting to rise in overt revolt. There was such an instance, we believe, in the Taft convention of 1908, when, sweltering in a temperature that in itself was maddening, the worried worm tried to turn. It was, too, in the case of a standard favorite son, one whose personal candidacy had come to be accepted as practically a routine feature of all Republican national conventions.

Under ordinary circumstances the affliction would perhaps have been borne with the usual benumbed, stolid resignation. But the particular oratory involved happened to be pitched in a quite special accent of mourning, maddening misery for which even the most convention hardened were unprepared. The vast audience lifted up its voice in waiting agony. But

It was sternly suppressed. There was not then nor will there ever be hereafter any hope of escape.

The bench show of favorite sons this year is unusually large. Besides the standards there are many new entries. And each son is equipped with at least one heavy siege gun orator. As an ordeal it promises to be heroic. When it is over the survivors, as usual, will take up the business of the convention.

At Least Two Battleships Should Be Authorized.

The Sixtieth Congress to which President Roosevelt sent his special message on April 14, 1908, urging that Congress "now provide four battleships of the most advanced type" was strongly Republican in both branches. In the Senate there were 61 Republicans and 31 Democrats; in the House 223 Republicans and 108 Democrats. The naval appropriations bill of that year authorized two dreadnought battleships of 20,000 tons each and ten destroyers.

An amendment to the bill, as it was reported, that four battleships in place of two be authorized the House rejected by a vote of 160 to 83, and the Senate by a vote of 50 to 23. At that time the dreadnoughts Michigan and South Carolina were almost completed and the Delaware and North Dakota were building. The first pair were to have a main battery of eight 12 inch guns, and the Delaware and North Dakota were to be equipped with twelve of these guns. The two new ships authorized by the Sixtieth Congress at its first session were to have the like main batteries.

Colonel Roosevelt now says that he asked in his special message that four battleships a year "be our continuing policy." That may have been in his mind, but he did not put it on paper. He wrote that "the most vital and immediate need is that of four battleships." A fair reading of his message gives the impression that the United States having fallen behind England and Germany in building and planning dreadnoughts we should do something toward closing the gap by authorizing four new ships immediately. The Republican Congress could see no emergency warranting such an expansion of the navy. In 1908 no one dreamed of a great European war, and at that time the American navy was distinctly superior to the navy of Japan.

Veterans in Congress like Senators Hale and Perkins, both Republicans, and members of the Committee on Naval Affairs, were not moved by President Roosevelt's special message, and they voted against an amendment offered by Senator Piles of Washington for four new dreadnoughts. President Roosevelt was regarded as an alarmist, but it is not to be denied that if Congress had heeded him we should have a stronger navy to-day. Probably no succeeding Democratic Congress would have balked at authorizing two new battleships a year. There may have been no war cloud on the horizon in April, 1908, but Mr. Roosevelt's instinct was prophetic. He should have credit for it now.

The Hon. EUGENE HALE and the Hon. GEORGE C. PERKINS were wrong, and he was right.

The four battleships should have been authorized in 1908. We would feel more secure to-day if they had been. But certainly the failure to see with prophetic eyes cannot be saddled upon the Democratic party. The Colonel should take his own party to task. It was in complete control of the Government, the minority being negligible.

Now in 1908 there seemed to be common sense in the position taken by Congress against President Roosevelt's four battleships. Congress is seldom if ever prophetic, and it must or should deal practically with appropriations. It is different to-day. The logic of the changed situation, particularly the lesson of the great fight in the North Sea, calls for more battleships. Congress can have no excuse for not authorizing at least two in addition to a squadron of battle cruisers, and they should be more powerful vessels than the Ersatz Worth of the German.

Nothing New Under the Sun, Even in Pacific Minds.

Fourteen years before GEORGE WASHINGTON was born WILLIAM PENN did "An Essay Toward the Present and Future Peace of Europe by the Establishment of an European Diet, Parliament or Estates." As WASHINGTON'S warning against entangling alliances has been followed by projects for American participation in the enforcement of international peace, so it was preceded by visionary projects of confederations to hold in forcible subjection members of the family of nations inclined to disorderly courses. PENN wrote for the theorists of 1616:

"He must not be a man but a statue of brass or stone whose bowels do not melt when he beholds the bloody tragedies of this war, in Hungary, Germany, Flanders, Ireland and at sea."

Melting with compassion for Humanity, PENN explored the desirability of peace and the means to it, and laboriously evolved his scheme of a European federation. There is a certain grandiose sweep of idea, a largeness of phrase with a haziness of outline and a tenuous quality in the conceptions that will not be strange to the would-be enforcers of peace in 1916. But Mr. PENN excels them in ingenuity with his device for avoidance of "quarrel for presidency." His Parliament of Nations would meet in a circular chamber, with "divers doors to come in and go out at, to prevent ex-

ceptions." The language in which the deliberations of the Sovereign Estates must, "to be sure," be conducted, is Latin or French. Pacifist minds are hotbeds for the seeds of war; peace and language are not agents of harmony.

The ideas of WILLIAM PENN were not one barleycorn ahead of or behind those of 1916. They took no more account of the opportunity afforded by general disarmament for those who would prepare in secret for violations of the common, imaginary, security. They paid no more heed to the cleavages of nature, to pride of race, lust for power, ambitions of rulers and conflict of interests. They were no more and no less workable.

If WILLIAM PENN's too ingenious scheme had been tried, more than two centuries ago, would the history of Europe have been turned into a record of peaceful consociation of the peoples?

Mr. Wilson's "Confidential Agents."

President Wilson has inflicted so many "confidential" or personal agents on foreign nations that the bewildered authorities of the South American countries who have been imposed on by a wandering tosspot are not open to the charge of gullibility. Strange creatures have worn the uniform of Mr. Wilson's selection, exercised the authority he has conferred upon them. The courteous and hospitable Latin Americans, informed on the idiosyncrasies of the President, are not to be blamed if they accepted at face value the pretensions of the wanderer whose bibulous habits betrayed him.

Some difficulty of this kind was inevitable. Mr. Wilson's refusal to depend on the accepted and recognized representatives of this country abroad for information to guide him in his service of humanity opened the door for impostors of all sorts, and the humiliating incident in a South American capital is one of the unavoidable results of the practice he has adopted to check up and amplify the reports of our diplomatic and consular service. It is not necessary to remark that this system of espionage is not calculated to please the officers with whose regular duties these peripatetic agents interfere; in most cases the sufferers are appointees of Mr. Wilson, and they have an easy road to relief if they choose to travel it.

It is the good name of the United States that has been imperilled by Mr. Wilson's course. Undoubtedly other self-styled "confidential agents" of the President are improving the opportunities he has provided for rascals, discrediting this country and endangering our relations with other nations. Some of them will be exposed, and their activities ended; but as long as Mr. Wilson finds it expedient to supplement the foreign establishment provided by law with personal representatives who have not undergone the scrutiny of the Senate before receiving their credentials, the rogues will reap a rich harvest and the nation suffer embarrassment.

One good thing about convention battles is that moral victories and draws are barred. If American women were as eager to be good housekeepers as they are to be up in style what a reformation we would have in our home life—A New York preacher.

They are eager to be good housewives and good fathers; they succeed in both ambitions; they are thoroughly admirable, and we should not like them a bit more if they neglected to clothe themselves becomingly and smartly.

"Smoking out" CHARLES EVANS HUGHES.

Evans Hughes seems to be about as difficult a job as "putting him in a hole" at one time a favorite occupation in Albany.

Does Borough President Marks believe that although he cannot by taking thought add a cubit to his stature, he can by flattery alter the longitudinal measure of his official life? Thane of Glamis and of Cawdor, king that shall be hereafter! Grateful New Yorkers, rising with the dawn, may curse the clock that lies to them and yet, the day's work done an hour ahead of schedule, devote their evening to labors meant for the reward of their benefactor. The Hon. MARCUS MARKS has just swapped an hour of his borough presidency for a term in the Mayor's chair. The bee that was in his bonnet now nests in the beard of Mayor Hiram, every tick of the gilded clock is a vote for him.

The Russians have struck at the weakest section in the long line in an attempt to turn the right flank of the Teutonic armies. The Austrians cannot withdraw a battalion from the Isonzo defenses. As they have been employing a great army in the Trentino of late it may be assumed that reinforcements have been sent from the eastern front, where the Russians have been lying in their trenches awaiting the hardening of the ground before resuming operations. In the spring not a wheel can be turned in the quagmires called roads.

It is the fashion to regard every offensive as strategical in the sense that it is intended to relieve the pressure upon an ally in some other part of the war zone. The Austrians will of course have to rush reinforcements to the Bukovina and Pripiet country if the Russian offensive proves to be formidable, and in consequence the Italians will have a breathing spell in the Trentino; but we are inclined to think that the Russians are not greatly concerned about aiding the Italians in their extremity. It is more likely that the activity now reported on the eastern front indicates an ambitious forward movement, having for its object not only a second invasion of Austria and Hungary but pressure on the Germans to abandon their campaign on the Dvina.

The Extra Dollar for Shoes.

After all, are we not to pay that extra dollar which the secretary of the executive committee of the National Boot and Shoe Manufacturers Association said a few days ago would be put upon each pair before the end of the year? There is an indication that all the members of the trade do not think it necessary, and besides the carrying capacity of the consumer has about reached its limit. Some of the largest producers of shoes and leather have shown an inclination to accept a fair profit and to take their share of the burden of the present war conditions. One of the leading retail companies of the country and the owners of chain stores, after conferences with the manufacturers, have agreed not to raise their prices.

The president of the association in sustaining its position said that before the war the United States produced only 50 per cent. of the leather needed for its use, and that the remainder came from Russia, Germany, Austria, France, Italy and Scandinavia. But the chief organ of the trade, *Hide and Leather*, believes that the average shoe and leather dealer knows nothing about the true state of our imports and that he is influenced by market gossip rather than by facts and figures. It says that the imports from Mexico, Argentina, Brazil and Colombia have greatly increased, and:

"It is thus apparent that our loss on imports of hides from Europe has been more than compensated for by imports from other places."

It adds this pleasing information: "From careful study of conditions in the hide and leather industries, there does not seem any reasonable ground for experiencing shortage in raw or finished materials. Outside of stocks of leather and shoes in first hands there are accumulations to some extent of shoes and other leather merchandise carried by jobbers and retailers. Undoubtedly there may be scarcity of novel styles in shoes, but the great trading in staple goods does not seem to be hampered in any way by dearth of supplies."

At least the consumer has been let in on the ground floor, and if he is called upon to accept another advance in his footwear he will insist upon knowing if the high prices result from a "gentleman's agreement" or the real condition of the market.

Hide and Leather continues: "Veteran and experienced shoe and leather manufacturers and wholesalers foresee the danger in prices being forced so high as to limit consumption and to stimulate substitution. In fact the shoe and leather business has been so prosperous for all concerned that there is a marked tendency to conserve this property and not rush it toward rags and shoes."

That seems good counsel. Besides, the poor consumer has troubles enough without being victimized on the strength of a stringency that does not exist.

One good thing about convention battles is that moral victories and draws are barred.

If American women were as eager to be good housekeepers as they are to be up in style what a reformation we would have in our home life—A New York preacher.

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OUR NAVAL PLANS.

Warnings From the Past Not to Let Politicians Muddle Them.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE SUN.—Sir: The present situation of our naval plans would be ludicrous were it not tragic. But this is nothing new. In 1881 the late Secretary of the Navy, Commodore Bancroft Gerry (this younger son is naval attaché in Berlin), came up the lower bay under steam, and made a dash for the shore, and the tide and a northwest breeze. She had just come from the politically notorious navy yard at Kittery, where her one graceful clipper bow had been removed and replaced by a vertical bow, made to look like a ram. It could not be used as a ram, for the ship had no ram, and it was not a clipper. It consisted of so-called "converted smooth bores," that is 11 inch guns of steel, with a lining tube of steel, fitted, of course, with a breech. They were of course much too short, and the only mystery is that they did not eject the tubes when fired.

Twenty-five years to be exact, there left the Brooklyn navy yard in a unfinished condition another ship, the Trenton, politically notorious as many of our readers. She, too, had these wonderful guns.

Now both these ships were products of a politically, not a scientifically, run navy. Poorly equipped, and they had used breech-loading ship guns. Our naval officers well knew the worthlessness of smooth bores, cast iron rifles and "converted" smooth bores, as they were called. They were of course much too short, and the only mystery is that they did not eject the tubes when fired.

But fortunately in 1881 Judge W. W. Hunt became Secretary of the Navy. He was an able jurist, an upright man, and a great admirer of the late Commodore Gerry. He did not touch with the intelligent, ahead-sight of the navy, and to him are due the reforms that have since been effected. He did not touch with the intelligent, ahead-sight of the navy, and to him are due the reforms that have since been effected. He did not touch with the intelligent, ahead-sight of the navy, and to him are due the reforms that have since been effected.

Later again when Sims and under him Rogers, then Judge, became Secretary of the Navy, they were followed by men of his singleness of thought, and Secretaries Tracy and Whitney were good. They were more interested in politics than in the navy. They were more interested in politics than in the navy. They were more interested in politics than in the navy.

England had pulled herself out of the slough of backwardness and discarded all her old muzzles loading eighty ton guns, and she had a fleet of ships that she showed the world the original dreadnought, a ship with all her defects as superior to any other battleship of the day. How could it be? Our officers had to swallow their disappointment, even if their very first production was far ahead of the English ship. The latter in the eyes of the world, not an original!

Today nobody, even in the War College, would dispute the fact that we cannot understand why navy men are not consulted on the question primarily and their advice taken in any event. It is not a matter of pride, but of knowledge. We know quite well that even the purse of the United States has a bottom. But laymen interested in the subject, not as a matter of course, but as a matter of fact, as a citizen, get mad when the politicians interfere.

Congress is very wise, no doubt, very wise, but it is not a body that is a lawyer doesn't go to a banker to have his eyes treated, or if he is a business man he doesn't consult an oculist. He goes to the doctor. If a man is a lawyer doesn't go to a banker to have his eyes treated, or if he is a business man he doesn't consult an oculist. He goes to the doctor.

Does Borough President Marks believe that although he cannot by taking thought add a cubit to his stature, he can by flattery alter the longitudinal measure of his official life? Thane of Glamis and of Cawdor, king that shall be hereafter! Grateful New Yorkers, rising with the dawn, may curse the clock that lies to them and yet, the day's work done an hour ahead of schedule, devote their evening to labors meant for the reward of their benefactor. The Hon. MARCUS MARKS has just swapped an hour of his borough presidency for a term in the Mayor's chair. The bee that was in his bonnet now nests in the beard of Mayor Hiram, every tick of the gilded clock is a vote for him.

There were reports circulated intended to embarrass me—FRANK HARRIS HITCHCOCK.

He was an optimistic man who thought he could embarrass FRANK HARRIS HITCHCOCK.

"Your trouble," said President Wilson to the graduating class at Annapolis, referring to the tests that have been given to the class, is that you are too proud to fight now he placed the new notion that Europe is having a year of madness.

The sanity of the Allies stands in the way of calling anyone in to make peace, stands in the way, indeed, of any early peace at all. At this moment there is no real government in Europe, with which a treaty of peace could be made. The German Government does not respect treaties, and so the only way to peace is through the overthrow of that Government or through such military progress as shall make that Government actually desire a permanent peace.

President Wilson, in an interview printed in both St. Louis morning papers, undertakes to relate what happened "when Mr. ROOSEVELT ran for President." He didn't—St. Louis Post-Dispatch.

Mr. BARTHOLOMEW is one of the most industrious manufacturers of history now in operation. He composes his facts as he goes along and thus saves himself the trouble of adjusting his theories to the records by which other philosophers are restricted and hampered. Once the Bartholomew system is understood it is easy to see how he reaches his conclusions, and his intrusion of Mr. ROOSEVELT as a candidate in 1908 is merely a characteristic exhibition of his method.

Mr. PERKINS would be happier if he were sure of his grip on his onward Christian soldiers.

Pork Defence.

When ships sail prey along our coast And steam to make attack, A court house out in Painted Post Shall turn them from their track.

When foreign ships pour the rain Of bombs and fire and wings, A court house out in Painted Post Shall fly to rend their wings.

When armies shall our seaboard lake Where now Old Glory waves, A widened creek near Great Salt Lake Shall bear defending braves.

And if despite all this they dare To still put up a war, A good road marked "The Thoroughfare" Shall lead them from the war.

McLARDON WILSON.

Naming the Baby in a Presidential Year.

First Baby—Think they will name you after Hughes?

Second Baby—No, I make too much noise.

SAFE DEPOSIT.

Useful Phrases Secure in Colonel Roosevelt's Keeping.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE SUN.—Sir: An alert correspondent of THE SUN promptly placed to a score sixteen years antedated the "Colonel's recent Western speeches" "washed words" with all the Colonel's meaning and explanations.

It is not surprising that they were received with contemporary offerings to the national vocabulary. It was the lady *Roseline* in "Love's Labour's Lost" who sagely remarked to *Biron*, fore-sighted, no doubt, one of the Colonel's admirers pointed:

"A Jew's prosperity lies in the ear Of him that hears it, never in the tongue Of him that makes it."

The Colonel knows a good phrase when he sees it, and knows how to make good use of it.

E. W. T.

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